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REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MMCR/RWE/101/12/1

In reply please quote:

No.: .....

## MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK

ZAMBIA AGRICULTURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
MOUNT MAKULU CENTRAL RESEARCH STATION  
PRIVATE BAG 7  
CHILANGA

26<sup>th</sup> March 2014

ProBodenrekultivierung e. V.  
Zu den Erlen 7a  
50374 Erfstadt  
Germany

### RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR A JOINT IMPLEMENTATION OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Dr. Nils Redde,

Increasing population, increasing energy needs and increasing food requirements causes an increased demand for agricultural land in Zambia. A significant part of the available land is the *Miombo* forest which is utilised by local peasants to gain fertiliser by traditional fire clearance in a system called the *Chitemene*: Farmland which is gained by fire clearing is cultivated for 3-4 years and left as fallow ground afterwards. After more than 30 years the land is usually regenerated sufficiently and can be cultivated again.

Rising population raises energy and food requirements involving rising use of land. So today second growth forest is cleared again after 15-20 years already. This leads to acidification and devastation of the local nutrient-poor soil entailing the impossibility to grow either forest or foodstuffs. This is a fact on a growing quantity of agricultural sites, especially in the northern parts of Zambia.

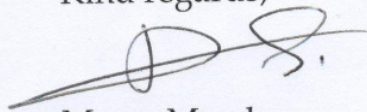
During the successful cooperation between ZARI and RWE Power AG in 2010 to 2013 in Mansa / Northern Zambia, we showed that re-cultivation of tropical fallow ground enables up to ten times higher more harvest of crops such as maize, groundnuts and finger millets compared to the traditional fire clearing. We verified that using re-cultivation and sustainability strategies that are based on about 250 years of operating experience from German mining areas are able to aim and breach the circle of fire clearing.

I'm glad that you found the association "ProBodenrekultivierung e.V." to continue this existing, successful cooperation and project. 25 peasant families are already successfully supported today in using the new farming practice. They founded a cooperative and committed voluntarily to avoid using the *Chitemene* system of cultivation. So a small contribution has been made initially to enhance soil fertility, food security and preserve forest and habitats for rare species.

In future, we should develop this project together to an important part of a Zambian strategy of food security. In fact it is not a problem of potential, expertise and human resources to reach this target, it's a problem of funds, budgets and work on the political level.

I would prefer to cooperate together with "ProBodenrekultivierung e. V." in the new ELD-Process of UNCCD to reach that strategic level. Please lets try together to become a Zambian Pilot-Project in this process.

Kind regards,



Moses Mwale

**Director - Zambia Agriculture Research Institute**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK**